

Message Text

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FOR ATHERTON

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 1143 ACTION WHITE HOUSE SECSTATE
NSC CIA USIA INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO
MOSCOW RABAT ROME JIDDA
USMISSI GENEVA USUN NEW YORK AMCONSUL JERUSALEM USIS LONDON
DIA WASHDC 15 *3? 77

QUOTE UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1143

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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA ACTION

USINFO FOR IOP/M, IPS, IBS, INE

BEIRUT FOR VOA

ROME FOR VOA

GENEVA FOR MEPC

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PAGE 02 STATE 033967 TOSEC 020010

JERUSALEM PASS ALSO TO S/S

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION ((33/77)) PRESS REVIEW, FEBRUARY 15, 1977

1. SUMMARY: SECRETARY VANCE'S INTERVIEW WITH ISRAELI REPORTERS IN

WASHINGTON GETS WIDE COVERAGE, SUPPLEMENTED BY REMARKS ON THE SECRETARY AND HIS VIEWS. HOWEVER, THE ONE TOPIC OVERSHADOWING ALL OTHERS IS THE YADLIN TRIAL, IN WHICH THE EX-GOVERNOR DESIGNATE OF THE BANK OF ISRAEL ALLEGED THAT SENIOR LABOR PARTY OFFICIALS, PRESENTLY ACTING AS CABINET MINISTERS, RECEIVED BRIBERY MONEY FROM HIM (SUBJECT COVERED IN SEPTTEL). END SUMMARY.

2. VANCE'S PRESS CONFERENCE WITH ISRAELI JOURNALISTS:

3. MEDIA CARRY SECRETARY VANCE'S INTERVIEW, A NUMBER OF PAPERS PUBLISH IT IN FULL. HEADLINES READ: BARNEA (DAVAR): "KEY ELEMENTS IN ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT ARE WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN INTERESTS." BLITZER (POST): "USSR WILL WORK WITH U.S. FOR M-E PEACE." MARGALIT (HA'ARETZ): "KEY ISSUE - THE PALESTINIANS." DISSENCHIK (MAARIV): "VANCE SAID HE DISCUSSED HIS MISSION WITH THE SOVIETS, TOLD THEM HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SHARE WITH THEM ITS OUTCOME."

4. COMMENTING ON THE INTERVIEW THE ISRAELI JOURNALISTS HAVE THIS TO SAY:

5. BARNEA: "THE MOST IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT THE INTERVIEW WAS THE VERY FACT THAT IT WAS HELD. STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAY THEY CAN'T RECALL A SIMILAR EVENT IN THE PAST. VANCE'S PREDECESSOR USED TO PLAY CAT AND MOUSE WITH THE ISRAELI CORRESPONDENTS...PROMISED BUT NEVER GRANTED THEM AN INTERVIEW." BARNEA CLAIMS THAT "THE IDEA OF THE INTERVIEW MADE SOME STATE DEPT. PEOPLE EDGY. THE JOURNALISTS WERE REQUESTED TO SUBMIT THEIR WRITTEN QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE, STICK TO THEM. THIS UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 033967 TOSEC 020010

IS SOMETHING AMERICAN NEWSMEN ARE NOT USED TO DOING. ONE OFFICIAL WARNED AGAINST DWELLING ON THE Kfir AND CLUSTER BOMBS, OR ELSE THE INTERVIEW WOULD BE STOPPED. THE ODD THING WAS THE ATTEMPT TO CENSURE THE QUESTIONS. THE ISRAELIS TRIED TO GET AROUND THESE RESTRICTIONS BY SUBMITTING AS MANY QUESTIONS AS POSSIBLE, SOME 30 OF THEM, BELIEVING THAT VANCE WOULD MANAGE TO ANSWER HALF OF THEM AT THE VERY BEST. BUT THE SECRETARY'S ANSWERS WERE SO SHORT THAT WITHIN 27 MINUTES HE DEALT WITH 34 QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS. VANCE FIT BETTER THAN THE ISRAELIS INTO THE 18TH CENTURY SURROUNDINGS OF THE MONROE CONFERENCE ROOM. HE LOOKED AND SOUNDED AS A SECRETARY OF STATE SHOULD - SYMPATHETIC, RESPECTABLE, DIPLOMATIC, FLUENT AND COLORLESS. THE ANSWERS HE GAVE SHOWED THAT IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS HE HAD TAKEN GOOD CARE TO FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF WITH THE FINE POINTS AND NICETIES OF M-E POLITICS. CONFRONTED WITH A BATTERY OF ISRAELI CORRESPONDENTS, WHO HAVE BECOME EXPERTS IN TURNING EACH SLIP OF THE TONGUE INTO AN INTERNATIONAL SCANDAL, THE SECRETARY TRIPPED NOT ONCE. THE MAN KNOWS THE BUSINESS OF BEING NON-COMMITTAL OR HOW TO REMAIN SILENT. HE ALSO KNOWS HOW TO

LISTEN. THESE QUALITIES WILL, PROBABLY, SERVE HIM WELL IN HIS VISIT."

6. BLITZER: "MOST OF VANCE'S COMMENTS WERE SIMILAR TO OTHER STATEMENTS HE HAS MADE ON THOSE ISSUES SINCE TAKING OFFICE. THE SECRETARY CLOSELY FOLLOWED EXISTING POLICY GUIDELINES IN REPLYING TO QUESTIONS. BEFORE SPEAKING, HE SEEMED TO STUDY CAREFULLY ALMOST EVERY WORD."

7. MARGALIT: "THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION WAS NOT HAPPY WITH THE 'EXPLORATORY MISSION' TAG ATTACHED TO VISIT...CHANGED THE SECRETARY'S RULE TO THAT OF 'AN ACTIVE LISTENER'. THOSE ARE NOT JUST GAMES OF WORDS. THEY REFLECT THE BALANCE WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN VANCE'S LISTENING ABILITY AND HIS ATTEMPT AT FACT FINDING." MARGALIT FEELS THAT VANCE'S "MAJOR MESSAGE" AS IT EMERGED FROM HIS PRESS CONFERENCE WAS THAT ON HIS ME TOUR HE WOULD SEARCH FOR A "FORMULA ENABLING THE PLO TO TAKE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 033967 TOSEC 020010

PART IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE."

8. WHILE WAITING FOR VANCE....:

9. MARGALIT SAYS THAT "IT WAS ONLY RECENTLY THAT A DECISION WAS TAKEN TO HAVE VANCE MEET WITH DEFMIN PERES. THIS WAS MEANT TO INDICATE THAT THE U.S. HAS NO PREFERENCE ABOUT THE TWO LAZOR PARTY MAJOR CONTENDERS FOR THE PREMIERSHIP. OBSERVERS NOTE THAT THIS MOVE REFLECTS THE AMERICAN VIEW THAT PERES' PROSPECTS ARE IMPROVING. THE AMERICANS ARE FOLLOWING CLOSELY THE YADLIN AFFAIR, HIS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE LABOR PARTY. IN THEIR OPINION IT WILL WEAKEN RABIN'S POSITION AT THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION."

10 ADDRESSING A LABOR PARTY GATHERING IN BEER-SHEVA, PREMIER RABIN REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD ASK SECRETARY VANCE "TO USE 1967 AS A MODEL YEAR IN US-ISRAEL RELATIONS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. IF THE SECRETARY AGREED. (RABIN) WOULD CONSIDER IT AS ONE OF ISRAEL'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS."

11. ISRAELI RADIO, AS WELL AS DAVAR'S BARNEA AND KIVITY (YEDIOT), REPORT THAT MR. VANCE HAS ADVISED PRESIDENT CARTER "TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLUSTER ZOMBS DEAL WITH ISRAEL." BARNEA AND KIVITY ADD THAT "THE PRESIDENT WILL PROBABLY ADOPT THE STATE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION. VP MONDALE AND TTTHERS HAGE PRESSED FOR GOING THROUGH WITH THE DEAL." (NO SOURCE.)

12. POST'S EDITORIAL IS MOSTLY CONCERNED WITH U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PLO, REITERATES THE REASONS WHY THE PLO CAN'T BE CONSIDERED AS A PARTNER TO NEGOTIATIONS BASED ON SC RESOLUTION

242. POST VIEW IS THAT "IF THERE IS A BODY OF MODERATE PALESTINIAN OPINION, WHICH ENDORSES (242), IT CAN ONLY BE FOUND OUTSIDE THE PLO."

13. POST'S ZE'EV SCHUL SAYS HE WAS TOLD BY "INFORMED SOURCES"
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 05 STATE 033967 TOSEC 020010

THAT THE KFIR DEAL "WAS SQUELCHED BY THE AMERICAN AVIATION LOBBY, WHICH DELIBERATELY MISLED U.S. POLICY MAKERS ABOUT THE DEAL... THE LOBBYISTS FED INACCURATE INFORMATION TO ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS CONCERNING THE KFIR'S TECHNOLOGY...."

14. MEDIA HIGHLIGHT "THE STRONG WORDS" USED BY STATE DEPT. SPOKESMAN TO DENOUNCE ISRAELI OIL DRILLINGS IN THE SUEZ GULF.
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